

VERMONT.

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**MEMORIAL**

OF

**SAMUEL C. CRAFTS AND OTHERS,**

CITIZENS OF THE STATE OF VERMONT,

PRAYING FOR

**FURTHER PROTECTION**

TO

**DOMESTIC INDUSTRY.**

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JANUARY 2, 1828.

Read, and referred to the Committee on Manufactures.

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WASHINGTON:

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1828.



## MEMORIAL.

*To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled :*

When a large portion of the community are in danger of irretrievable ruin, unless the protecting arm of the Government is extended to their relief, we, the undersigned, inhabitants of Vermont, should deem it a failure of the duty which we owe to our common country, to ourselves, and to our posterity, did we neglect to represent the fact, and the causes which have tended, and are tending, to produce such an effect.

In a memorial, dated 13th December, 1826, laid before your honorable body by the delegation in Congress from this State, we took the liberty of representing, at some length, the distressed situation into which the wool growing business and the woollen manufactures have fallen, owing to the rivalry of foreigners, and the facilities which the existing laws of our country give them, to undermine these valuable branches of national industry. As that memorial is doubtless on the files of Congress, we shall not take up the time of your honorable body by repeating the statements therein made ; but must beg leave to call your attention again to that document ; the time that has since elapsed, and the farther examination of the question, having tended more fully to demonstrate the soundness of the views which we then took of the subject.

We regret, however, to find that the claims we honestly set up, and which we did not, and do not, perceive are calculated permanently, or even temporarily, to injure any portion of the community, and which we then believed, and still do believe, would promote the most solid advantage to our common country, should have been met with a spirit of hostility and animosity, both against the general principle, and our individual claim, not warranted by the policy of the measure, nor by the friendly feelings and spirit of conciliation which has ever marked our conduct towards our Southern brethren : for, whatever difference of opinion we might entertain as to the policy of any measure, we, as members of the same great family, have been disposed to discuss the expediency of the question with manly frankness, but with a spirit of conciliation calculated to promote the harmony of the Republic.

It is not the interest of a few capitalists, as has been so often asserted, nor the narrow sectional or local interests of a few individuals, which we wish to urge upon your honorable body ; but we venture, fearlessly, to assert, that it is the general interest of the Repub-

lic at large, and the immediate interests of nearly three-fourths of the population of the Union, which we solicit your honorable body to take into consideration.

Extensive manufactures will be the source of an active intercourse between man and man, between State and State ; between the North with the South, and the East with the West ; affording a wholesome interchange of the surplus products of each portion of the community to supply the wants of the other ; thus giving an active circulation to the products and medium of the country, highly beneficial to all ; which intercommunication would greatly tend to efface local and sectional prejudices, promote good will and harmony, strengthen the bonds of the Union, and render our happy institutions permanent. They would also greatly enlarge our foreign commerce, and enable us to supply domestic, instead of being the consumers of foreign fabrics ; change the current of trade in our favor, which, for the last ten years, has been setting against us ; and cause an influx of the precious metals into the Republic, instead of their exportation, together with some millions of the United States' funded and bank stock, to pay the annual balance of our trade in favor of England.

Your memorialists are aware that it has been gravely urged, that the Constitution does not authorize the passage of laws for the promotion of American industry ; but, although we do not pretend to be profound jurists, yet we take the liberty to say, that the common sense of mankind must be opposed to such a construction.

We apprehend that the foundation of the social compact is the welfare of the community ; and to form a Government with powers too limited to attain this end, would defeat the very object which the People had in view in its formation. Such a compact would truly be a shadow without a substance ; a solecism in the science of government. But, with deference to your honorable body, we must be allowed to remark, that, after the decisions of eighteen Congresses, beginning with the first, under the Presidency of the Father of his Country, we should have supposed that the power of that body to promote American industry, by protective duties, was so completely established, as not to have admitted of a question at this time. Can it be believed that the patriots and sages of the Revolution, who had hazarded their lives and fortunes in defence of the liberties of their country, should have deliberately violated that Constitution which the People had empowered them to form ? Or will it be believed, that, after having formed this national charter, they were ignorant of the powers which it conferred upon the Legislature of the Union ? It is evident that one or the other of these positions must be assumed, if the modern doctrine, denying this power, is correct. Is it probable that so able a statesman, so patriotic a citizen, and so honest a man, as is the venerable Madison, should not know the meaning of an instrument, which, it is understood, he drafted ? Yet his honesty, or his knowledge of the extent of its powers, must be impugned, if the new construction of that instrument is right. Your memorialists are persuaded that there ought not to be a doubt on this head.

Admitting the power, the only question that can arise will be as to the expediency of the required protection. Upon this point, we are aware that much difference of opinion exists ; but we explicitly declare, that, in zealously urging our claims to protection, we are not actuated by any unfriendly disposition towards any section of our country, and totally disclaim the most distant idea of hostility towards any portion of our fellow-citizens ; and, in pursuing an object which we consider identified with the best and permanent interests of our country, should it excite any feelings of animosity or sectional prejudice, it will be to us a source of serious regret. To adopt the vague theories of several ingenious European writers on political economy, who, in many of the most important principles which they attempt to establish, disagree with each other, or of a naturalized Englishman, who has composed a work to enlighten our seminaries on this subject, but whose later writings are at variance with his former, in opposition to the experience of the nations of Europe, as well as that of our own country, would literally be sacrificing the reality to the visions of fancy.

It is not soil or climate which constitutes the wealth of nations. It is knowledge, wisely directing the industry of the inhabitants. Industry is the source of wealth, and knowledge that of power. The idle, ignorant, and bigotted Italians, Spaniards, and Portuguese, although enjoying a fine climate and most fertile soil, are the poorest and most feeble people in the civilized world. Their neglect of home industry, and consequent dependence upon foreigners for the supply of their wants, have reduced them to a state of individual and governmental poverty, and of national weakness, which must excite our sympathy for the people, although we cannot extend our pity to the Governments who have reduced those nations to such a state of degradation, by neglecting to encourage their industry, and cherish their resources. But what a different picture does England, does France, Holland, Prussia, and Germany, present ! Public and private wealth, power, and consequence, have followed from the encouragement and protection of the industry of those nations, and their relative prosperity has been in proportion to the encouragement which their respective Governments have given to manufactures.

Whatever doubt may remain in the minds of some, of the utility of similar protection, we should suppose that the experience of those nations, as well as the beneficial effects that have arisen from the experiments we have already made, would absolutely remove it.

We, therefore, trust, that Congress, in its great wisdom, will see the propriety of affording the protection solicited by the Harrisburg Convention in behalf of a numerous body of agriculturists, who, in the aggregate, have vested an immense capital in the wool growing business, as well as to the manufacturers of this staple, upon an ample home supply of the various fabrics of which the well being of the country essentially depends in a time of war, and which is, at all times, so necessary to the comfort of the community.



Your memorialists are also of opinion, that there are various other articles which require the fostering care of Government, and beg leave likewise to refer to the recommendation of the Harrisburg Convention, in favor of the all-important article of iron, of hemp, and flax, of the distillation of spirits from American grain, of glass, and the finer kinds of cotton goods, which selections we think judicious and highly worthy of attention.

CRAFTSBURY, (Vt.) *December 3, 1827.*



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